

Dear Friends,

When Kristin Smart was diagnosed with breast cancer, she had to make a lot of decisions very quickly – decisions about surgeons, treatment options, and medications. She was presented with so much new information that it would make anybody's head spin, let alone someone who had just received serious medical news. Kristin needed help navigating her cancer diagnosis.

Luckily for Kristin, she had a dedicated team of oncology nurses to help her weigh her options, answer her questions, and give her the support she needed.

The countless stories just like Kristin's are why I'm proud to introduce legislation to help cancer patients get the support they need from well-trained and hard-working oncology nurses. The Improving Cancer Treatment Education Act of 2012 will give Medicare patients the opportunity to meet with a nurse about their treatment options following a cancer diagnosis. While most oncology practices provide these services to their patients, they are not covered by Medicare currently – despite the fact that more than half of all cancer diagnoses occur among people aged 65 or older.

Cancer treatment involves a team of doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. The complexities of the treatment can be overwhelming. However, having a nurse explain treatment plans and provide resources to patients between the time they are diagnosed and when they begin treatment can significantly improve their health and well-being.

For more information about the Improving Cancer Treatment Education Act and my work as the House Cancer Caucus Co-Chair, please visit my website at <http://israel.house.gov> .

Sincerely,

Steve Israel
Member of Congress